

BALLET TODAY 1/4

JULY 1953

DANCERS OF
BALLET THEATRE

Leslie Caron
—Ballerina Lost

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—dance hatrick

DAUGHTER
N BALLET

Alicia Alonso
—Profile

Ballet Digest
—the ballet
month in news
and pictures.



Alicia Alonso

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ballet to-day

Preview..

THIS issue may well serve as a preview number for the American National Ballet Theatre which arrives at Covent Garden on July 13.

Over a number of years, Ballet Theatre has established itself as the most professionally competent and "finished" ballet group in the United States. More than this, it has proven that the word *theatre* in the title is not merely salutary.

Ballet Theatre is definitely the most theatrically effective of ballet companies. Why? Because it allies itself to the tradition that a thing worth doing is worth doing integrally. Covent Garden still attempt to follow their lead in stage electrics without much success. And most dancers have seen a new scope made available in ballet through the ideals of Ballet Theatre.

Important, too, is that the ballet public has seen in this company a foretaste of what all ballet could—should—be: technically competent, artistically novel, theatrically effective. For the dancer—an education. For the audience—entertainment.

THE WELLS' URGENT NEED

BEFORE another Sadler's Wells season is upon us, the directors of the company might do a deal of serious repertoire thinking. Unfortunately there is no commercial hard-head available to force success upon them, so those in charge of the Wells' artistic destinies must work out a commercial future for themselves.

Last season proves the need for serious replanning. The new works included *Veneziana*, a picture postcard mounted for the cost of a major canvas. *Homage to the Queen*, a work that can no more outlast the Coronation than the souvenir issues of the women's magazines. *The Shadow*, graceful but shallow. Where was the stable food of a repertoire: the ballet that would be acclaimed and take its place as a permanent attraction?

Nowhere, last season, I am afraid.

This coming year the Wells must stage at least two new major ballets of importance and audience appeal. And let them be *daylight* ballets—the murk of depression lies like the hand

● Tanaquil Le Clercq of the New York City Ballet in Igor Stravinski's **BACIO DELLA FATA** mounted for La Scala, Milan by Balanchin.

... by

Peter

Craig-

Raymond



of a creditor on contemporary ballet. Away with it; ballet has never "had it so good," to quote an American trade paper which was puzzled by the gloom surrounding an art that was finding an ever-growing public.

OPTIMIST NEEDED

What we have not had as yet is a ballet to rejoice in this new audience we have found. The film *Tonight We Sing* called this audience "the S. Hurok public." He found his feet as an impresario by attracting a cross-section of the people and giving them of his best. He succeeded. Ballet, too, has a new, huge audience.

Why not appreciate it? And an end to the cant of pandering to the public. They don't want it! What they do want is worthwhile, entertaining ballet. Pessimism can hardly produce it... Sadler's Wells will have to find a few optimistic talents.

And that is an urgent need.

FIRST DANISH VISIT

Ballet Theatre vacate Covent Garden to give place to the Royal Danish Ballet on August 10. This will be the first visit of the Danes to Britain and few companies have had such an advance word-of-mouth popularity.

And well-deserved it is!

In August, 1951, P. W. Manchester, writing in *BALLET TODAY*, summed up her impressions of a visit to the Danish Ballet in Copenhagen by saying:

"The Royal Danish Ballet is, perhaps, a little out of touch with developments in the great world but if it could learn something from other countries, very certainly other countries could learn much from it."

This season will do much to prove what is preserved, and what unfound, by being "out of touch." I hazard the guess, too, that we will indeed learn much.

Prior to their new tour of the United States Sadler's Wells Ballet will have a short season from August 24 until September 5. It is doubtful if any new work will be presented, but it will give us the opportunity of seeing our home ballet before their decisive tour. Decisive because America has seen a great deal of ballet since the last Wells visit and will treat this tour with, I think, more familiarity and less awe.

All to the good. As it stands now the Wells is strong enough to tour successfully on its dancers and major ballets. The superlatives may be lacking, the enjoyment I think not.

The Old SLEEPING BEAUTY And The Bold VIOLETTA ELVIN

THE UNFORTUNATE THINGS OF SADLER'S WELLS "SLEEPING BEAUTY" ARE TOO MANY TO LIST, EVEN THOUGH ONE USUALLY BEGINS WITH THE BAD AND PULLS A GOOD FACET OR TWO OUT OF THE HAT TO END.

The good thing here is simple—and singular. Violetta Elvin. Her dancing—not only has a mature quality, something new to her, and a confident technical foundation, but is so perfectly theatrical that it puts to shame the company.

She makes light of the Aurora role while the others make slave labour of their few minutes' task.

FACILE, YET FULL

How dull the prologue is can be gauged by how loud the explosion which sound-effects the entrance of Carabosse. On May 19 it was loud indeed! Elvin's arrival in Act I relieves the monotony (which has the *corps* talking to themselves for lack

of anything else to do) and brings magic into an essentially magic ballet.

In the last few months this new maturity of Elvin's has not gone unnoticed. It is facile, yet full. She makes no obvious effort yet is commanding the stage as never before. Everything about her has taken on a larger, broader dimension which dominates the performance. And, unfortunately, this is like a clean broom sweeping out the lethargic *corps* and subsidiary dancers from their humdrum corners.

Elvin has the quality of shaming her cast's performance without the majesty of Markova to improve it. Markova's guest appearances this season made a new body of the Wells company. Rigor mortis has again set in after her departure.

THE OTHER DANCERS

① Michael Sones replaced John Hart as Prince Florimund at short notice and danced particularly well, revealing a fine sense of partnering.

② Rosemary Lindsay is steadily fulfilling my prophesies about her. She captures some of the Beryl Gray dignity in her beautifully strong lines. Her Lilac Fairy is indeed excellent.

③ Philip Chatfield's Florestan was, perhaps, too rigid, but he remains an interestingly promising male dancer. Perhaps, too, a little scope would help.

● Rowena Jackson and Brian Shaw did what was necessary to ensure the Blue Bird *pas* never leaving the ground. Disappointing from Shaw.

● The Three Ivans' dance seems to become more simplified every time I see it and a good deal of revitalizing could well be made on almost all the Act III *divertissements*.

The *pas* and variations from Elvin and Sones were excellent with Elvin. I noticed, singing the music as she danced and seemingly enjoying her success immensely. A very warm audience gave her a strong reaction and created a good atmosphere for her work.

MELTING POT

It is of no surprise that a ballet which has been the melting pot of so many diverse choreographers (five are mentioned on the programme!) should be a patchwork of excellent and execrable. Tchaikovsky's score is rather a lost cause, too, and joins its fate with that of the Messel costumes—so many so dowdy—and the uncertain lighting by John Sullivan.

What the *Sleeping Beauty* needs is a definitive hand to finalise a battle fought too long by too many choreographers.

The kiss which awakens Aurora to brilliant life might well be used more generally on the whole work.

—And Fonteyn keeps her place

Later, Margot Fonteyn danced Aurora. What is there new to say about this? I have as many reviews of her Aurora as I have programmes in my file.

GODDESS?

Fonteyn appears as some kind of Goddess of Ballet Treasures—a ballerina whose task in life is to re-create with unfailing greatness the classic roles of ballet. But as an archivist she remains warm, human, alive.

ATMOSPHERE

With her Brian Shaw improved, Svetlana Beriosova brought a great deal of young dignity to the Lilac Fairy and the production itself lost less than it normally does. But I am still campaigning for a more atmospheric, less *divertissement*-broken *SLEEPING BEAUTY*.



Blood Wedding

Perhaps more—A Promising

Engagement

ALFRÉD RODRIGUES' conception of the novel "Bodas de Sangre" was presented by Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet under the title *Blood Wedding*.

A likely subject for Rossellini were never to enter ballet, *Blood Wedding* has a married man, a newly-married bride and her bridegroom, and a plot that has the bridegroom discover his bride's love for the other married man. A neat if conventional, triangle.

Rodrigues' failure is in uncovering only a surface veneer of feeling. The choreography glosses where it might interestingly delve. The plot is worked out with too great a facility and no ground given to suspense.

● REASON

But the only reason these faults are worth mentioning is that the promise of *Blood Wedding* is itself so great. Unshapely as is much of his choreography, Rodrigues comes out of this ballet as a man who has so much to say that he tongues over his words too quickly. He needs to give half an eye over to the audience, take their tempo and work to it. His talent, even now, is enough to give *Blood Wedding* the adjective "interesting," which is more rare than the gilded praise so often given.

Blood Wedding is, I think, more a promising engagement than a consummated marriage. The other partner—Denis Apivor. His score for this work is the best theatre music I have heard for some considerable time. He makes effective use of his percussion and imbues a strong, sensuous colouring into his music and into the ballet.

What we must have now is another work from Rodrigues and Apivor. And Isabel Lambert has a rough, broad visual approach to décor that sweeps its suggested atmosphere over to the audience. Her front drop is wholly excellent and her horizontally-lined background interestingly original.

● MEETING

Altogether, then, a meeting of three obvious talents—Rodrigues, Apivor, Lambert. And I would take a long-shot wager on their next work as something nearer the total success *Blood Wedding* promised but never quite managed.

Is Rodrigues forced into projecting surface feeling by the dancers at his disposal? Certainly the dancing in this ballet left more in the mind's potential than it ever put on stage.



David Poole as "Leonardo,"—The Married Lover

ELAINE FIFIELD as The Bride and DAVID POOLE as her married lover used quick roughness where unrestrained temper was demanded. Their meetings were of the climax kind but the music each time was better than the dancing it supposedly accompanied. Fifield had a stage presence, a dignity of movement that gave body to the work, but Poole hardly seemed to get down to his dancing in earnest except for the last embrace before his combat with the bridegroom.

● EFFECTS

Several excellent effects were obtained by the choreographer from the children especially their play amidst the dead bodies as a curtain. Excellent theatre this. The trees of the forest made a sombre, fine stage picture in scene four and some of the crowd patterns were clever.

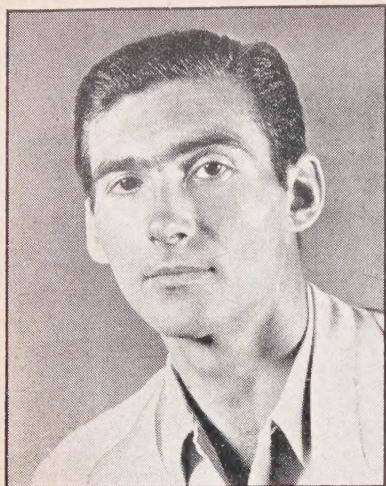
PIRMIN TRECU danced the Bridegroom, a role which could have been more a virtuoso display (in contrast to Poole's sombre temperament) than as given here. MARGARET HILL's

Mother had of necessity small range but a useful slowness in giving weight to the dead scene. The Married Man's Wife, who in sensing the coming tragedy gives theme to the ballet, is well drawn by DOREEN TEMPEST.

The after-feelings on this ballet leave one thing to be said: Rodrigues was either trying for a new approach to each dancer's "beginnings" or these were simply left without preparation. Several times Poole and Tempest walked to a position and—suddenly—broke into a wild, tempestuous solo. These surprised me, not theatrically, but as a jolt away from the ballet's illusion. The lack of preparation for several solos definitely hindered the belief in the plot and this might well be remedied.

● PROMISE

To repeat myself: I have devoted this space to *Blood Wedding* because I see in it a very real promise. In Rodrigues, a choreographer with a broad goal. In Apivor, perhaps the best ballet music we shall have. In Lambert, a most useful artist.



Igor Youskevitch

WITH one or two breaks, Igor Youskevitch has been premier danseur of Ballet Theatre since 1946. A Preobrajenska pupil, he has danced for Nijinska, de Basil, Monte Carlo and other groups.

He joined Alicia Alonso on her 1948 tour of the Ballet Alicia Alonso and has been her most regular partner ever since.

At 41, Igor Youskevitch is undoubtedly the finest male dancer with an American company and is one of the definite assets of Ballet Theatre.

MARY ELLEN MOYLAN came to Ballet Theatre after rising to ballerina status with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, which company she joined early in 1943.

She has not, so far, played a very large part in the Ballet Theatre fortunes but perhaps now—with Nora Kaye gone—more opportunity will be given to a dancer too long called "promising" and too slowly arrived.



Mary Ellen Moylan

Ballet Theatre

Ballet Theatre originated in the Mikhail Mordkin ballet school, New York. In 1937 Mordkin essayed his own company to stage his pupils' work and, two years later, what he established became Ballet Theatre.

Lucia Chase was his ballerina, and his angel—that is, the person who lifted the bill for all costs. In 1940 Chase premiered her company with a number of classic ballets mixed with a few new works.

FIRST SEASON

Anton Dolin was in that first season, as were Andree Howard, Eugene Loring, Hugh Laing, Shabelevski, Antony Tudor, Dokoudovsky and Nora Kaye.

Sol Hurok's arrival to manage the company saved Ballet Theatre from extinction although he left them in 1946 after paving the way to some degree of stability. The company's history is one of many things attempted and—leaving the humdrum line—most things done and done well.

The repertoire it brings to London is nearly a digest of the choreographic talent of our time. Even the now-rival director George Balanchin once staged several works for Lucia Chase!

THIS IS IT

If any company is a virile, future-confident monument to ballet in our time, this is it. Ballet Theatre has come through a decade without even a hint of retrenchment. Other companies have had better ballets, better dancers—but never was better use made of existing talent.

If I call it the company of the future I intend no disrespect to its past . . . merely a salute to its attitude. Here is one group that offers no peg for the hats of professional pessimists in ballet.



Alicia Alonso

AT one time Kriza studied with Anton Dolin before joining Ballet Theatre just over thirteen years ago.

An interesting facet of Ballet Theatre is its "lifetime" approach to dancers: few seem to leave the company!

Obviously this company has a breadth of artistic scope and vision which adequately keeps each principal dancer content. Kriza has created roles in such works as *Interplay*, *On Stage*, *Romantic Age* and—perhaps the ballet for which he is best known—*Fancy Free*.



John Kriza

—and Ballet Theatre's Ballerina

ALICIA ALONSO

ALICIA ALONSO is, without doubt, Cuba's most famous woman—more relevant, she is also heir-apparent to Markova's throne. For this dancer the way was harder even than is usual in ballet. At the outset of her career as a dancer her father, a conventional army officer, frowned upon his daughter's love of dancing.

Her mother abetted her so well, however, that Alicia had been dancing professionally for over a year before her father learned about it!

It was her husband, Fernando Alonso, who was to give her the greatest encouragement and help. He married Alicia in 1937 when she was fifteen and took her to the United States.

Here, although he first started as a businessman, he also began to dance, together with Alicia, at the School of American Ballet and the Vilzak-Shellar School in New York.

DEBUT AND CHANCE

It was in musical comedy that they made their debut. This bored them so it was with alacrity that they joined the corps of Ballet Theatre when it opened in 1939.

It was some time after joining Ballet Theatre that her greatest obstacle appeared.

She began to notice that her timing was often wrong, often she bumped into things without reason. A doctor was consulted and, after several operations, she was told that she would have to lie flat on her back for a year. Without moving. Without laughing. Without crying.

"For me," she says, "this was tragedy. A ballerina learns with her eyes, and it was absolute torture for me to lie still and feel my muscles losing their suppleness, my body growing slack and weakened."

Although her daughter and mother kept her company at times, this was against "doctor's orders." For the most part Alicia was alone.

ALONE AND LEARNING

While she was alone she realised that since dancing was her whole life, she *had* to keep learning.

And she did. Not with her eyes, but with her hands, and brain.

In her mind she danced again and again the roles with which she was familiar, realised her mistakes, and corrected them with Fernando's help.

She danced with her fingers and he would correct any misinterpretations.

It was there on her bed, and with her fingers, that she taught herself

Giselle. This ballet is her favourite, perhaps deservedly because it was in such a difficult way that she learned it.

This dancing with her mind was improving her memory as proven later when she astounded critics by learning the complicated part of Lizzie Borden in *Fall River Legend* in less than a week.

WALK AND DANCE

When the year was up, not only had she to use care with her eyes, but with her body.

She had to learn to walk all over again, and only walk, for dancing was forbidden.

This was more than she could bear and, although she had to deceive her mother and her husband, she attended daily practice at a studio near her home.

Then, one day, in the midst of a hurricane, she was struck on the back of the head by glass splinters.

Although bruised and cut, no damage had been done to the retina of her eyes and the doctor told her she could dance again.

Immediately she wired Ballet

Theatre, returning to them as soloist. That was in 1943.

TRAGEDY AND MATURITY

Through all the tragedy Alicia Alonso became a mature artist, an artist of beauty and sensitivity.

She still possesses, for all her greatness, perhaps as part of it, an almost childlike awe and wonder of the lore and legend of the ballet.

Her greatest superstition is in leaving behind her, in each dressing-room she occupies, something which belongs to her—"just," she assures herself, "to make sure I'll come back one day."

Although technically sound, it is her ability to intermingle dance and drama which makes her approach greatness. Once familiar with the basic steps of a role, she forgets about line, concentrates on variations which will give character and reality to the role. She never merely plays herself dancing a role, she loses herself in the part.

The dancer who learned perfection in ballet through her fingers has wrought a place for herself by that very trying for perfection.

A high place.

Luciana Novaro and Giulio Perugini in *EL AMOR BRUJO* (L'Amore Stregone). The de Falla music was used by La Scala, Milan, for Margherita Walmann's production. This is a further Erio Piccagliani photograph from La Scala's current season.



Les Chimeres

Ballet Workshop presented *Les Chimeres* as part of their last programme of the season.

If I were as blind as critics are legended to be, I could sum up the whole aural part of the programme as a song cycle—every ballet presented had a vocal score! I, perhaps antiquatedly, believe that ballet is sufficient to hold its own. Good ballet, that is.

The impression I get from Ballet Workshop is that nobody agrees with me and all concerned feel something must be done to keep the audience from going home. This, I can assure them, is not the something.

Douglas Smith's costumes for the "chimeres" were excellently carried out but his décor was poor in itself and unsatisfactory as a background for these costumes. The choreography, by Peter Darrell, was rather a digest of possible brief movements than a composite whole. Noreen Sopwith did all that an interesting dancer could to make the work succeed. Perhaps, for her, Darrell should just retitle it in singular: *La Chimeres*.

FOUR SONGS

Sibelius may have needed James Agate as publicist, but he hardly needed dances mounted on his music. After watching this work for a while I read a programme note hoping to understand better what was happening. It helped immensely—until the curtain came down and I discovered I had read the wrong note! So much for the work's story-telling quality.

Wendy Hilton impressed me with her own dancing.

VOODOO RITUAL

WARM spot of the ice-encased Sonja Henie spectacle which arrived for a short stay at the Empress Hall, Alexander and Martha.

I must immediately admit a missing eye so far as these extravagant ice affairs are concerned, a huge audience very heartily proved its disagreement with me. Fairer than to mention this I cannot be!

⑤ BRAVADO

But two Cubans, Alexander and Martha, raised the critical thermometer from freezing to warm appreciation.

The star of the show, a glamorous, proficient Sonja Henie, undulated through a mess of imitation rites—Cuban, Hawaiian and the rest.

Barely visible behind the huge ice floor, on stage, these two dancers brought a virile, seemingly authentic fire to their bravado technique.



⑥ VIBRANCE

What was the quality which startled the ballet-encircled mind? Vibrance. Only three times during the month have I found it. In Violetta Elvin; in the understream of Rodrigues' *Blood Wedding*; and, surprisingly, high above the heads of Sonja Henie's ice troupe.

NERINA

Fonteyn

GREY



SUBSIDISED HOMAGE

FREDERICK ASHTON'S opportunity of using all the talents of Sadler's Wells Ballet went as awry as well-proportioned plans so often do. He had Fonteyn, he had Grey, he had Elvin, he had Nerina. Rassiné, Field Grant, Sones, too. And Malcolm Arnold's music, Messel's designs.

A WEALTH OF ENGLISH BALLET GENIUS, IN FACT.

QUEEN ELEMENTS

The four ballerinas are the elements of Earth, Fire, Water and Air. Each has a variation projecting her element but nothing in the ballet does much more than fill in time before the real purpose—the elements paying homage to a golden Elizabeth I—which closes the work.

Nothing much was to be expected

from a ballet mounted as a kind of subsidised ballet souvenir of a Royal occasion. Elvin and Fonteyn give what sparkle there is, some of Messel's work is worthy, Ashton moves unhesitatingly from poor to best with a disjointed ease that points to little affinity with the theme.

TRUE PLACE?

In medieval drama and dance most touring bands, or royally instituted groups, kept a stock curtsey-and-bow piece in their repertoire to stage when the annual increment was due.

Such was the place for this type of "homage" ballet. Today I feel greater homage could have been done the Queen by presenting a new work in the great tradition of grand ballet, not in mimeographing a pastel tribute to her ancestor.

Ballerina Lost

●Leslie Caron, in an interview, is wondering when she will dance again . . .

Photo: M.G.M.



LESLIE CARON hardly cried on my shoulder but she was certainly vague as to her place in the magnocratic world of Hollywood.

The place: London's Leicester Square and the Empire Theatre. Leslie Caron had flown in that morning to attend the preview of *Story of Three Loves* or *Lilli*—she hardly knew which.

As it ended, she could attend neither. They were delayed by M.G.M. awaiting the installation of widescreen. So Leslie stayed to meet only the press. A pet subject of my biased—in this instance—pen for years, I found her a very ample exchange for the lunch this twelve o'clock meeting had lost me.

THE PAST

But to write "for years" about a dancer only 21 now?

Leslie was successful young—at 15. Then, after studying at the National Conservatoire in Paris, Leslie danced in Lichin's *La Recontre*. And, at 15, she found herself famous almost in the fictional "overnight."

Two years later Gene Kelly took over from Lichin and used her in the 1951 Oscar musical *American in Paris*. By the time she danced for Kelly, Leslie had stored up two years of touring experience with Ballet des Champs Elysees.

What has this so-young girl lost apart from her native accent? What has she added apart from a hesitant, warm Californian tongue? The credit side has film stardom, international recognition . . .

But Leslie Caron might yet go down as our ballerina lost.

A prize property of her studio she will be allowed to dance only so long as ballet has a cinema appeal. In *Story of Three Loves*, already, she does not dance a step. Certainly she has proven that, when asked to act, she can do so more than adequately.

THE QUESTIONS

But who wants her to act? Apart, that is, from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer?

When will she dance in the theatre again? Would she prefer to have more ballet in her year than is currently the case? How does she feel about organising her own company?

To all of these questions Leslie looked a little surprised, a little "who, me?" as if she unaffectedly still thought of herself as unimportant. Does she realise that her film career—and, say, a further film a year from now on—could act as the finest advance publicity for a ballet tour?

What Agnes De Mille has done on the strength of her Broadway choreography, Caron could obviously do after *American in Paris*, *Lilli*, *Story of Three Loves*. With these as her advertising, a personal tour of Caron ballet would be in the gilt-edged security class.

Is Leslie interested—or is it that a young girl has been thrown into too varied and wide a scope of interests to assimilate and organise them?

It would be a tragedy if every time we see a Leslie Caron film we have to add a picture postcard postscript:

"Wish you were here."

KATHLEEN CROFTON ON MARKOVA'S GISELLE: ACT TWO



Photo: Roy Round

BEING, as she is, a product of the Russian school, and having spent her formative years as a member of the great Diaghilev Ballet, Alicia Markova is better equipped to give an authentic interpretation of the role of Giselle than is anyone else dancing the part today.

After its first production in Russia in 1842 Giselle remained consistently in the repertory of the Russian Imperial theatres and the version we know today came to us, not from the Paris Opera, but direct from Russia in the mind and the note books of the *maitre de ballet*, Nicholas Sergeyev.

EXCLUSIVE

For the first time a ballet magazine invites a prominent teacher to analyse a dancer's technical performance. **BALLET TODAY** sincerely thinks that such a qualified opinion can be of inestimable help to dancer and audience.

Alicia Markova is in a direct line of descent from Andreyanova — the first Russian Giselle — Bogdanova, Vazem — teacher of Spessivtzeiva — Pavlova, Karravina and Spessivtzeiva.

It was at the Savoy Theatre in 1932, when the Camargo Society presented Olga Sperrivtzeiva in Giselle, that Alicia Markova saw the ballet for the first time.

I first saw Markova as Giselle in 1935 and my most recent sight of her in the role was on June 13 when, as far as the actual steps are concerned, she danced the part exactly as she did in 1935.

ONE ACT

Rightly or wrongly, I have always felt that choreographically the second act of Giselle has retained far more of Coralli's original arrangement than has the first act. Therefore I propose to restrict myself to an analysis of Markova's work in this one act of the ballet.

For me, Albrecht the philanderer, is in the second act remorseful and grief stricken though he is utterly dominated by his own imagination and when he just sees the Markova-Giselle-Wili by the tomb I have a feeling that she is quite unreal and may well be the wraith of his conscience externalised.

No other Giselle today can—for me—produce this effect.

MOVEMENTS

All Markova's movements have the fluidity which was one of the great distinctions of the Russian school.

All her gestures come from inside; they originate in the solar plexus and flow on into infinity.

She does everything with a quiet dignity and never thrusts herself at her audience; and in a day when it is the fashion to call attention to oneself by—metaphorically speaking—a roll on the drum, this quality of Markova's is, alas, so rare that it is almost unique.

● Preceding *Blood Wedding* at Sadler's Wells on June 5 was a very bad *Pastorale* with Patricia Miller, Trecu, Blair and Annette Page. As it is two years since the ballet's first presentation the fault which looks like under-rehearsal must in fact be under-interest.

● At the Mercury this month: Paul Draper again. He opens on the ninth.

● The Danish Ballet will present the following ballets during their coming London season: *Coppélia*, *Napoli*, *Konservatoriet*, *Galeotti's Amors og Balletmesterens Luner*, *Sylfiden*, *Qarrtsiluni*, *Lichin's Graduation Ball*, *Folkesagn*, *Romeo and Juliet* to the Prokofiev music and Ivanov's *pas* for *Casse*. Four of these are Bournonville works.

● Edgar Wenzel, previously of the Kurt Jooss Ballet, gave five recitals at the Mercury Theatre during June.

● Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet are appearing (July 6-18) at the Central African Rhodes Centenary Exhibition in Bulawayo. Three thousand people are expected to be

. . . Briefly

in the audience. The company will be one of three dance groups at the Edinburgh Festival in August.

● Mary Munro will dance with Alexander Bennett in Ballet Rambert's *Giselle* revival. This work has been out of the Rambert repertoire for four years — Nathalie Leslie and Sally Gilmour had previously danced in it for the company.

● Paying his own costs, the Marquis de Cuevas flew his company to Paris last month. Occasion was the farewell party of William G. Hayter who became British Ambassador to Moscow.

● A further work was added to the New York City Ballet's season at City Centre last month: *Con Amore*. This ballet by Lew Christensen was originally presented by the San Francisco Ballet in April. In the N.Y.C.B. production two San Francisco dancers appeared—Nancy Johnson and Sally Bailey—in their original roles.

festival

**THE COMPANY
WHO HAVE AS**

ballet

**AN AIM PROJECTING
YOUTH AND LIFE
INTO THEIR WORK
—AND OVER TO
THEIR AUDIENCES**

SHOCKING the conventional outlook of aristocratic St. Petersburg, a minor issue concerning the costume of Nijinski resulted in a major ballet revolution. Refusing to conform to Imperial usage, Diaghilev formed his own company and migrated to Western Europe. The Russian (in fact cosmopolitan in many aspects) ballet which exists as a sort of archetype in the minds of most balletgoers was thus, in its inception, a force working for dynamic change in this branch of the theatre.

Setting aside the not always successful panache of Lifar at the Paris Opera the pupils and successors of Diaghilev have always come to be associated, as indeed customary in the second generation of revolutions, with consecration rather than iconoclasm.

This is most obvious in the example of Dolin, last of the male line of the Diaghilev dynasty, and his company, Festival Ballet, which must be viewed in the general context of Russian Ballet.

Dancing as early as 1923 with the Diaghilev Ballet, Mr. Dolin formed in the early 1930's after the death of the master-impresario, his own short-lived troupe.

After its break-up he has been famous chiefly as a sort of lone-wolf of ballet bringing with his former partner Markova, memories of Russian Ballet to new audiences at the Gau-

mont State, Kilburn, and remoter parts of provincial England.

It was to bolster up the Markova-Dolin combination often playing against back-cloths and *corps de ballet* of appalling banality and ineptitude, that Festival Ballet was first formed in 1950.

TRADITION

An ardent traditionalist, expressed in his enthusiastic devotion to the monarchy, Dolin emphatically eschews the more sombre psychological undertones of modern ballet, openly expressing his predilection for "good clean unpretentious hold-your-girl-by-the-hand enjoyable dancing."

This was evident in the 1950 repertoire of his new Company, which, optimistically identifying itself with the year 1951, and aptly summing up its spirit, came to be called "Festival Ballet."

A little later this proved fully justified when the ballet played before crammed audiences of Christmas holiday-makers at Festival Hall.

Most of the staple classics were presented. A *Nutcracker Suite*, rather over-complete with little Clara, *Swan Lake* Act II and *Sylphides*.

More out of the ordinary was the Benois-Fokine-Stravinski *Petrouchka*.

THIS SEASON

Festival Ballet, after its initial reception, rapidly became accepted and had successful Continental seasons in Paris and Monte Carlo.

In 1952 the Markova-Dolin partnership sadly dissolved and Markova left the Company.

The season which starts at Festival Hall this month, in addition to reproductions of several Russian classics, will see presentations of several new ballets.

These include one with choreography by Michael Charnley, an inventive new choreographer from Ballet Workshop.

In time indeed this Company may remedy its weakness in general production and become a very valid medium of expression for the artists it has assembled.

Vassili Lambrinos
of Festival Ballet
in Louroudis'
"Pastoral of
Greece"

Photo: Studio, Liseq

by
**A. P.
PERRIN**



City Ballet in Action

A Roger Wood

Folio

Roger Wood's new volume of photographs, **NEW YORK CITY BALLET IN ACTION** (Saturn Press, 8s. 6d.), contains some of the finest of this usually fine photographer's ballet work.

On the right here is a shot of Nora Kaye and Michael Maule in *The Cage*.

This Jerome Robbins ballet created some attention in London but nothing compared to the ovation given it in New York when it was premièred during 1951.

Costuming of the insect ballet was, perhaps, one of the more interesting facets and the girls' costume is clearly seen here.



FOUR TEMPERAMENTS by Balanchin is one of his classroom ballets—no décor, no costumes, no props.

In the picture (left) is Herbert Bliss who danced the Melancholic variation as if, the book's caption has it, "he were boneless."

There are scores of photographs in the book, including a frontispiece set of Balanchin done by a sort of regal Polyphoto process!

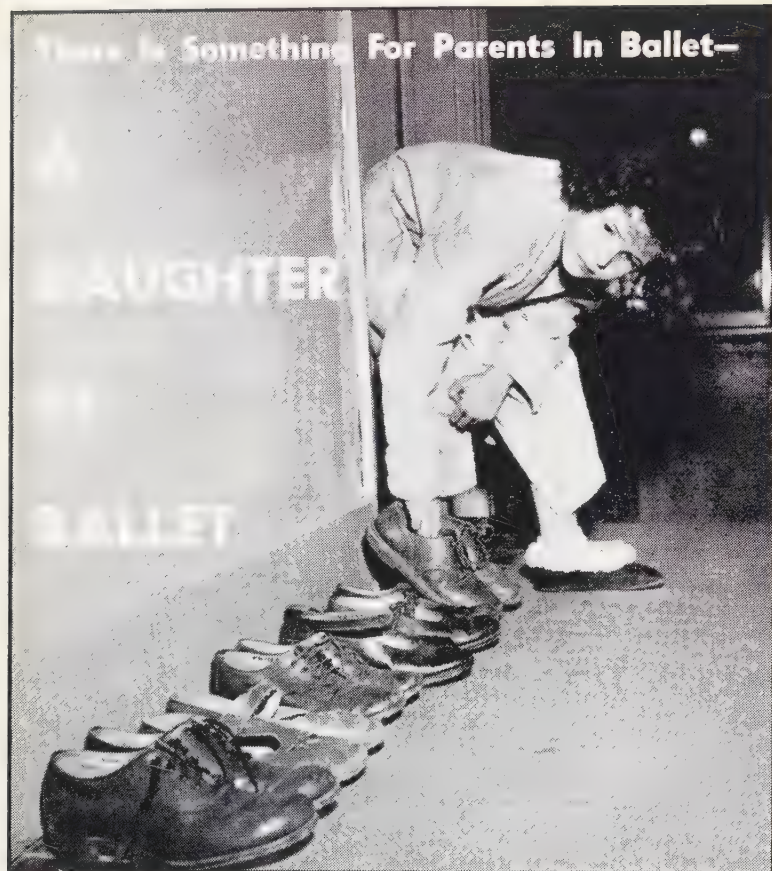
The Two London Seasons of Balanchin's New York City Ballet — 1950 and 1952 — are given permanent record in a choice volume of photographs

The most effective photograph of the collection: from *ORPHEUS*. The waterfall curtain used here looks far more theatrically useful in the photograph than it was on stage. But it was a good idea. The ballet itself (seven shots of it are in the book) is, I think, one of the better Balanchin works. Stawinski's music makes it worthwhile, just as Roger Wood's photograph here gives a dramatic verve to it that Balanchin missed.

Below: After writing the above and turning to the book for reference on this photograph from *SYMPHONIC CONCERTANTE* I was amazed by the first sentence: "nothing like so effective on stage."

Again a tribute to Wood! In the photograph, Tallchief and LeClercq are shown centre.





as a dancer-to-be. She will probably want to be a civil engineer or a . . . well what is the little-girl equivalent of an engine driver?

I hope, anyway, to have the strength to help her in these ambitions as much as I could if she were "dance-struck." And if she is *ballet*, what a joy to take her to her first class or hand her the first cellophane-wrapped tunic'n tights suit. After that our first shop of call would be Freed's in St. Martin's Lane, where "Margot gets her shoes." There to buy the very first satin-pink ballet shoes. But there would be no tutu . . . not yet a-year!

WEST STREET

Then, maybe, we would stroll back up the Lane past the New Theatre and round by the Cambridge—scene of so many ballet triumphs—to West Street. Although she is now gone we might somehow find Madame Volkova — "Vera" — back in her barn of a studio, the second door down.

There would be a cheek-peck for me and a polite, appraising handshake for my daughter. And what Volkova can discover in the time taken to shake a baby's hand! Then perhaps Volkova and I would shake agreement too. And "baby" would be *in*.

In for the hardest training a woman could ever have. Hour by sweating hour she would spend—every day—at the *barre*. At first limbering up might seem just too easy. Later, when legs and bodies cool down to a rusty adolescence—not so easy! After the hundredth *plier* I might have a crying, soulful child in my lap swearing that my friend Volkova was not the charmer I had made out!

And neither is she.

In class she has a business, a vocation, if you like. Ballet it is called; and ballet dancers are what Volkova and her fellow-teachers set out to produce. Tears, tempers and tantrums notwithstanding. And, certainly, having a critic for father would be no help. It would probably mean a few lectures even after hours!

If all this sounds just so much punishment—you are right it is! Ballet is no easy art, no glamorous star-on-the-door limelight. Ballet, if it means anything is spelled with a capital W . . . for work.

CONSOLATIONS

There are consolations. The first "Parents' Day," for one. For this we would need another shopping tour. Or, her mother having propounded some novel ideas on the tutu a few evenings ago we might turn in her direction. Home or abroad again in

MAGIC . . . your red-carpeted walk into the Opera House, Covent Garden . . . aglow under a Victorian yellow light from the towering chandelier . . . blue paintwork competing for softness with white-cracked marble sunken pillars . . . the Grand Tier, Row A . . . huge, regal sweep of the maroon and gold-braid curtain . . . a white stage . . . SYLPHIDES . . . and Fonteyn.

Yes, there's magic here.

There is magic in a colder atmosphere, too. An atmosphere of ten a.m. . . . ten-year-olds and up . . . bleak, large studio . . . a single wooden *barre* . . . patched darned tights and old sweaters . . . a larynxed-voice teacher bawling her "and 2, 3" . . . and the children who will soon bring a new generation of *sylphs* and *Sylphides*.

And that is my magic. It's a thrill of fresh new birth, which takes all the ballerina's talent to make me forget. Here, in a class, we have the enthusiasm that too often is displaced by the from-the-wings-on grin of later years. And here it is we have the pure joy of living and dancing. Spotlights haven't yet barbed these dancers' paths with fame promises. Money is yet to set up its target marker atop their souls.

ALL NEW

It's all new, and fun. Hard work, yes. But they love it. Somehow this disappears in after-years. This simple

love of what is to be their life's work. And with its disappearance goes most of its pleasures for them . . . for us.

How much more would ballet's audience respect dancers; how much appreciate what they see at curtain rise if only "Selected Parties," as the castle guide books say, were sat quietly in corners of various classes for a few hours!

Selected Parties mind you, not to include parents. A ballet teacher's *problem one* is to capture her charge away from the mother's vanity. How often I have seen the poor child, in her first year at school shown off to visitors at the fireside. "Do a Fouette, dear." She ought to be bouncing a ball or jumping around with a yoyo—both of much more use and better for her.

It is a temptation of course. My daughter, I know, will appeal to me

Photograph taken at the Legat School,
Tunbridge Wells

Ballet in Honours List

★ In the Coronation Honours List M. Marie Rambert, was awarded the C.B.E. Also honoured was Osbert Lancaster, Daily Express cartoonist and designer for the ballet *Bonne-Bouche* at Covent Garden.

Gloriana composer Benjamin Britten became a Companion of Honour.

Coppelia in Budapest

★ Delibes' *Coppélia* was produced for the first time in Hungary at the Budapest Municipal Theatre.

The original score was used with some additional Delibes music arranged by the Hungarian composer Jenő Kenessey.

SWANHILDA

Swanhilda was danced by the young ballerina NORA KOVATS, who studied at the Leningrad ballet school. The choreography was by GYULC HARANGOZO, the décor by ZOLTAN FULOP, and the costumes by TIVADAR MARK. (See story on page 17: Hungary's Dancers.)

Festival was Her Idea

★ Audrey Mildmay (Mrs. John Christie) died at the beginning of June after a lengthy illness.

She was the originator of the Edinburgh Festival idea and, with her husband, founded Glyndebourne Opera. The idea for the international festival came to her while she was with *The Beggar's Opera* company on tour. Given to Rudolf Bing (now of the N.Y. Metropolitan) he brought it to life in 1947.

THREE GROUPS

This year the festival Audrey Mildmay originated will feature three dance groups—Ballet Theatre, Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet and Pilar Lopez Spanish Dance company.

ballet digest

Chicago sees Dance Photographs

★ During May the Ballabile Society presented Chicago's first exhibition of dance photographs. Britain's Baron, and Paul Wilson were represented.

Jose Greco Biography

★ On another page will be found a review of Jose Greco's appearance in the film *Sombrero*. Now Greco is preparing to stage his autobiography.

Peggy Phillips has been commissioned to write *Flatbush Corrida* for Greco and it will be set in New York, Seville and Mexico. It will tell of Greco's arrival in Spain with the intention of becoming a matador . . . and of how quickly he discovered his actual talent for dancing.

Nila Ampara will play with Greco and the musical play is tentatively scheduled for this winter on Broadway.



Three members of the Festival Ballet—Anton Dolin, John Gilpin and Natalie Leslie—leaving London Airport by B.O.A.C. Constellation for Canada where they made their 2½ weeks tour recently. They visited Montreal, Quebec, Ottawa and Hamilton.

Max Story for Television

★ Max Beerbohm's *Happy Hypocrite* is to be filmed in New York for television. A ballet "translation" of the story has been attempted and David Lichin is choreographer and director.

Cuevas Ballet in Italy

★ The Grand Ballet de Marquis de Cuevas danced in the Rome-produced film *Neapolitan Carousel* early last month.

Several members of the group had speaking parts in addition to their normal dance roles.

Bach to Broadway

★ Amazement is being caused in American theatrical circles at the reaction to Agnes De Mille's Dance Theatre company and their programme "Bach to Broadway."

At a relatively high cost, with no "star" names to guile the box-office, the company has completely filled its date book for a six month 110 city tour of the U.S.

Leading the company are Gomze de Lappe and James Mitchell.

Also surprising the trade circles is the fact that Sadler's Wells' September 13-commencing season has already outstripped all Broadway in advance bookings: £70,000 so far. Added to the unique figure is the fact that this total was received without a single advertisement and in just under three weeks.

Now, with advertising, an equal sum should be in the theatre before the opening night.

Celia Franca in U.S.

C CELIA FRANCA's Canadian National Ballet will be appearing next month at the Massachusetts Jacob's Pillow Festival.

This will be the Canadian group's debut season in the United States.

To page 17, please

Ballet Month - Coming Events

American National Ballet Theatre at Covent Garden

- July 13-15 Sylphides, Aleko, Fancy Free, Theme and Variations.
- July 16-18 Constantia, Fall River Legend, Graduation Ball.
- July 20-21 Design With Strings, Giselle, Rodeo.
- July 22 Constantia, Rodeo, Interplay.
- July 23-25 Theme and Variations, Combat, Three Virgins and the Devil, Gala Performance.
- July 27-29 Til Eulenspiegel, Billy the Kid, Gala Performance.
- July 30-31 Til Eulenspiegel, Caprichos, Giselle.
- Aug. 1 Sylphides, La Fille Mal Gardée, Rodeo.
- Aug. 3-5 Lac de Cygnes, Harvest According, Interplay.
- Aug. 6-7 Design With Strings, Fille Mal Gardée, Caprichos, Theme and Variations.
- Aug. 8 (mat.) Sylphides, Fille Mal Gardée, Fancy Free.
- Aug. 8 Sylphides, Combat, Fancy Free, Aleko.

Several classical *pas* will be presented during the season.

Festival Ballet at Royal Festival Hall

- July 9-18 Les Sylphides;
Alice in Wonderland (a two-act work by Charnley to music by Horovitz and with décor and costumes by Kenneth Rowell);
Symphony for Fun.
- July 20-25 Swan Lake (Act 1);
Vilia (ballet version of Lehar's Merry Widow by Ruth Page; décor, costumes by Wakhevitch);
Prince Igor.
- July 27-28 Concerto (choreography by Lambrinos to Grieg's Piano Concerto; décor and costumes by Francisco Reymundo).
Giselle;
Le Beau Danube.
- July 29-Aug. 1 Petrouchka;
Scheherazade;
Le Beau Danube.
- Aug. 8-8 Alice in Wonderland;
Vilia.
- Aug. 10-15 Nutcracker (in full);
Spectre de la Rose;
Bolero;
Prince Igor.

Full reviews of the season will be published in the August and September issues of **BALLET TODAY** and the

remainder of the season, from August 17, will be diaried in the next issue. During August, Anton Dolin's *Permit to Yesterday* will be premièred.

International Ballet

- July 6 (two weeks) Dublin Gaiety.
July 20 Belfast Opera House.
July 27 Bradford Alhambra.

Ballet Rambert

- June 29 Theatre Royal, Windsor.
July 27 Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury.

Coming European Festivals

SALZBURG FESTIVAL in Austria will include **EVERYMAN**. Also in Austria a Tyrolean Folklore Band Festival at Innsbruck on July 4. Operettas will be performed on Lake Constance to a lakeside audience at the Bregenz Festival from July 25.

PROCESSION OF Penitents on July 26 in Furnes (Belgium) is a Passion tale of great antiquity. Marriage of Giants, August 23, in Athens. This is one of the renowned "giant" festivals of the Belgians.

IN GERMANY the Wagner Festival at Bayreuth lasts from July 23 until August 23. A folk event, Prince's Wedding, takes place in Landshut during July.

INTERNATIONAL DANCE and Song Festival in Perugia, Italy, from the end of July. At Arezzo, Saracen's Joust, in authentic costume later in the year.

DAUGHTER IN BALLET from page 14

St. Martin's Lane . . . we would need a *tutu*. And a white satin top. And new shoes. Maybe a swansdown skullcap, too.

Saturday afternoon. 2.30. Ushered in and sat down. A few Chopin bars on the rehearsal piano and . . . **ENTRE!** . . .

The chubby, strengthening legs carry forward their new little professionals. What worries and scenes have passed back stage (a dressing room), what grown-up gossip has been swapped to help along the waiting time. What crises have been overcome.

Now, on stage, all is well. A few slips, too rounded angles, perhaps . . . even a fall. Who cares? Right in front we have the potential *corps* . . . leads . . . ballerinas . . .

And taxi-ing home afterwards, the stories to be told again and again. Of the strap that broke. Of the shoe that arabesqued off into the far left corner. Of that *silly* pianist. Of that beautiful Madame Fonteyn who came to watch. Of Madame Volkova herself, set sure in the background.

To bed!

MORE MAGIC

More magic? Well, there is that of taking her to her first gala at Covent Garden. In ankle-length ballet skirts but not—definitely not—as a dressed up sponge cake in pink ballet slippers. We're back in row A of the first tier (a back row of the stall would be better, if less ornate) and the young head is buzzing around looking for people.

We could conjure up special treats for her tastes. Lunch with the adored Margot even. Or an early dinner with

a few dancers from a visiting company. Perhaps even a book dedicated to her . . . if she gives me or anyone else time to write one.

There would be a special, personal magic for me in watching her relax from her so-early begun work at times. With the huge gollywog she's bound to love. Or the more fragile menagerie of glass animals—the unicorn presented by Tennessee Williams. But perhaps she would need a few more years before seeing anything of Tennessee's masterful art.

A few years more and she might be back-row in the *corps-de-ballet*. A few years more . . . who knows or can guess? Whatever happens all the beauty of a pure magic will have been won and treasured for ever.

There is something for parents in ballet. Most things for the dancer in her art. **EVERYTHING** for ballet in its new blood.

First Tcherina Role Arranged

Ludimilla Tcherina, whose contract with Universal-International Films was recently announced, will probably make *The Galilean* as her first picture for this company.

The story has been bought by William Goetz and has been published as a novel by Frank Slaughter.

Ballet Caravan Work Revived

Ballet Caravan's *Filling Station* was revived after fifteen years by N.Y. City Ballet during the spring season. Janet Reed and Michael Maule were cast in the Lew Christensen work with music by Virgil Thompson, who wrote

the score for Stein's *Three Saints in Four Acts*.

The Filly was also added to the repertoire. Choreography for this horse tale was by Todd Bolender to John Colman's music. Maria Tallchief danced the Filly, Diana Adams danced the Mare.

Agnes de Millie Ballet for London

It now seems probable that the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre group will have a London season before the end of 1953. They are currently on their first tour which is meeting with a great amount of success.

from page 15

Ballet digest

More Russian Ballet Films?

The possibilities of further Russian ballet films being brought to this country are strengthened this month.

Kenneth Rive of the Continentale and Berkeley cinemas in Tottenham Court Road (*Ballerina* played here) visited Moscow recently to arrange an exchange of British and Russian art films.

N.Y. City Ballet Financial Crisis

The New York City Ballet and the opera company attached to N.Y.'s City Centre are in grave financial straits again. A drive launched some months ago to bring public support to the Centre has failed. Only a quarter of the required amount has been raised, I learn.

Last year's visit to Europe brought a financial loss of over £15,000 to the Ballet despite good audiences.

Another Don Quixote Film

Another film version of *Don Quixote* will be made late this year.

S. Spiegel of Horizon Pictures is to produce the film in Spain and England, using the widescreen process. At least two Spanish dancers will be used for one sequence.

Lese Majeste From Kirstein

N.Y. City Ballet's Lincoln Kirstein prepared Ashton's *Illuminations* to celebrate Coronation eve.

This ballet was badly received here last year and Kirstein reportedly said that, "when it was performed in London one scene, showing the hero knocking the crowns off the heads of a king and queen particularly annoyed the Duchess of Kent who turned her back on the ballet."

Asked why—following this—he had scheduled the ballet as a Coronation offering, Kirstein replied: "The Duchess won't be here."



Hungary's Finest Dancers Flee to West

● By incredible coincidence, just as this issue was prepared for press using a story here entitled "Ulanova's Discoveries Rewarded," the dancers in question came into the news.

On May 31 it was learned that Istvan Rab, 23, and his 21-year-old wife and partner Nora Kovats, had fled Communist Hungary to seek asylum in western Europe.

These two dancers recently received a £600 Kossuth Prize after being praised by Galina Ulanova during her visit to Hungary in 1947. Nora studied under Vaganova and Istvan partnered Ulanova in *ROMEO AND JULIET* when they appeared in Moscow at Ulanova's invitation.

Rab and Kovats were the youngest couple to be honoured by the Kossuth Prize and are recognised as Hungary's finest dancers. No details have reached me on how they escaped, but I wonder if the authority's prize money came in useful?

The Subscription Rate for *Ballet Today* is 14s.
Address to 15, Penrhyn Road, Kingston

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Two Creatures of One Prometheus

When Beethoven and Vigano met in Vienna, a hauntress
outlived their joint creation

Ballet

Backgrounds : 1



WHEN Beethoven and Vigano met, two of the greatest artistic composers of the eighteenth century tied their promise together for one creation. Salvatore Vigano was thirty-two, Beethoven one year younger, when **THE CREATURES OF PROMETHEUS** was performed. The date, March 28, 1801. The place, Vienna. The theatre, The Imperial Court.

Eight years later the death of Jean Georges Noverre placed Vigano in the forefront of ballet choreographers. Beethoven had no rival—his most prolific period was beginning and would not subside until eight of the nine symphonies, most of the piano sonatas and string quartets, and **FIDELIO** were complete. If artists have primes, both of these were certainly to come no closer to theirs!

FORERUNNING PETIPA

The fusion of such a pair was an event unequalled until the century-later co-operation of Marius Petipa and Tchaikovsky which brought about the classic **SWAN LAKE** and **SLEEPING BEAUTY**.

Beethoven's music, in fact, was only this once given to the dancer. Not until 1938 was another ballet built upon this great romantic's work—and that, by Massine, was little but an affectation atop the Seventh symphony.

It was with Vigano that the ballet settled briefly in Italy after its infancy in the French courts under Noverre and Jean Dauberval whose pupil Vigano was. Austria and Beethoven were both stops in the years preceding his appointment as maitre de ballet at La Scala, Milan, which gave him the clay with which to put his dance-drama ideas into practice. The theory of these years remains for us, the ballets themselves are lost. A second Prometheus ballet was staged by Vigano in Milan—strange how both partners in the ballet could never rid their imagination of the Prometheus theme. To it Beethoven returned again and again—even the finale of the *Eroica* contains the hauntress.

Sanquirico's designs for these Scala productions are our real guide to the broad magnificence of this, Italy's period as foster home of the dance. With Vigano, even though

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● The two sketches reproduced here are taken from "Meister Der Graphik.Vigano" published by Christian Wegner Verlag in Hamburg. The article on this page is the first in a series of Ballet Backgrounds which will be the only historical feature published in **BALLET TODAY**. The series will cover ballet by pin-pointing individuals rather than the more conventional period descriptions.



great Carlo Blasis remained, Italy lost her art back to France and to the new talents of Taglioni and Grisi.

VIGANO DANCED

the original production of *THE CREATURES OF PROMETHEUS*, Vigano himself danced one of the two roles, partnered by Cassentini. The plot is that of sculpt-given life by the gods and the various possibilities of life, ending in nuptials, complete the ballet.

Vigano took his plot from the popular appetite of Vienna where there is no doubt, used both it and the ballet itself to set in motion the ideals of composite design which he inherited through Dauberval from Noverre. A nephew Luigi Boccherini, the composer, Vigano wrote the music for several of his own ballets and has been rather wildly called a "da Vinci" and, by Stendhal, "greater than Shakespeare." Both of these worked, however, in a less resistant medium than choreography.

SINCE 1938

Since the 1938 Massine ballet to the Seventh symphony, no attempt has been made to use the Beethoven music, only the most theatrical of any?

Only twice since then, in fact, can I trace a ballet usage, first in 1943 for *COMPANY AT THE MANOR* by Kurt Weill. For this production, at the Cambridge Arts Theatre, a Cook arranged the Sonata in F Major. Three years later Leonide Massine mounted his second Beethoven work, his time upon the Archduke Trio. Entitled *LES BACHQUES*, the work was produced by the "Ballet America" company of Shabolevski and Grantzeva. This company and its repertoire lasted but a few weeks before dissolving. Along with Beethoven ballet, a Handel, Chopin and Mozart's *Petits Riens* were lost.

So, in a century and a half, only four ballets have been added to this most dramatically apt composer's work. And, in addition to our loss, neither these nor a single one of the more than forty ballets of Salvatore Vigano have survived the years. So many stepping stones were marked by Vigano in London, Padua, Venice, Rome, Milan, Vienna, Madrid—that not one has retained the foothold of such a master.

NOT ONE

And in all Beethoven not one score has been found to give its place in the standard repertory of the dance. Two incredible facts in the biographies of two such unrivalled artists who, together once, could not float a success on the rising tide of the art which combined both of their own. Romain Rolland once wrote an epitaph which Mabel Mann uses in her film scenario "Beethoven":

"When we listen to Beethoven's music we can understand that, now and then, a divine creature from the far heavens takes mortal form . . ."

Mortal form was given the two creatures of Prometheus in such a process. Sad that, unlike the music itself, the ballet is too mortal—too transient to have lived.

Extra point was given recently to "Prometheus" outliving reality—the ballet was recreated in Germany at the Dusseldorf Staatsoper as part of West Germany's revival of interest in the ballet.—Ed.



EUROPE DANCES

Varied and Vigorous Dance in Yugoslavia

FOLK-DANCES and songs reflect the daily life of people. Work in the house, in the farmyard, in the field; the joys and sorrows that are the experience of life—all leave their impression on the songs and dances of a nation.

Formerly the songs and dances of Yugoslavia were more closely associated with everyday life. Today they have lost most of their ritual character, and are performed, whenever the mood is felt, as a recreation after the day's toils.

● INFLUENCE

The folk dances took shape and developed under the influence of historical events, some more, others less.

Those associated with ritual and customs have more persistently preserved their older forms and still contain some archaic traces. Dances, cultivated in surroundings where the old patriarchal order of things has survived, remote from town civilisation, have undergone less change.

There are ritual dances in central Bosnia in parts of Macedonia, in the mountainous regions on

the borders of Dalmatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which are still executed almost in their original form.

In regions with a developed network of roads, and close to towns and modern civilisation—for instance, in parts of Slovenia, Slavonia, Vojvodina—there are dances that give a general impression of being modern or influenced by modern dances. The range of Yugoslav folk-dances is very wide: from the very ancient, simple and primitive dance, to the complex dances, modern in composition.

● MIRROR

These dances express the feelings and moods of the people under various circumstances: they mirror all their fundamental features, their ideas, cares and desires.

In the mountainous parts of Montenegro, Bosnia and Dalmatia, for example, folk-dances are

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Yugoslav Dances

from page 19

performed on small, flat patches because, owing to the terrain, they cannot be performed elsewhere. In the plains of Slavonia and Vojvodine the dancers have greater latitude in performing their figures. These elements have consequently contributed to their variety.

● TYPES

Folk-dances can be classified according to the various elements which go to make them up, dances for children, men, women, and for both sexes.

They are epical in subject matter, and in this respect differ from the conventional folk-dances. Others are entertaining, cheerful, dramatic or jocose. The form in which the dances are performed is usually circular, which has earned them the name "kolo." In contrast to this round dance, others take the form of a semi-circle or serpentine.

During the performance the dancers may evolve various figures and alter the shape of the dance at will.

The folk-dance is a collective dance; it may be accompanied by music, or may be without accompaniment—the silent dance. In this latter case, both when the dance is performed by an individual

and when it is performed by two, three, four or five dancers, the onlookers participate not only with their eyes, but the movements of their bodies.

● RHYTHM

Where there is no musical accompaniment, the rhythm is supplied either by a measured beat, by the tinkling of the women's ornaments, or occasionally by the periodic use of some kind of signal which helps the dancers keep the rhythm.

Odd as it may seem that folk-dances can be silent, it is yet a fact that they are the most inspiring dances.

The folk-dances accompanied by vocal music and the silent dances show this form of art in its most complete preservation. In every aspect they are harmoniously rounded off, nothing in them being superfluous.

Though the movements are frequently repeated, they are animated by words and the melody of the vocal accompaniment; the variability of the theme and its flexibility harmonises well with the regular movements.

● RICHEST

The richest dances are those performed to both vocal and instrumental accompaniment. When harmoniously accomplished these reach a high standard of art.

Dances are performed on various occasions, the most usual being Sundays and holidays when the performers gather and begin spontaneously, even while still engaged in lively conversation.

● KEEN

The people of Yugoslavia have a keen sense for dancing, as is shown by the innumerable folk-dances of the Croats, Serbs, Slovenes, Macedonians and Montenegrins.

In view of the different regions of their origin, the Croat folk-dances are extremely varied. The Slavonian dances are full of temperament; the difficult upland Dalmato-Bosnian dances are serious; the dances of Croatia proper, of Istria and the islands, are quiet. Of special interest are the Slavonian "Kolo" accompanied by the tambouritzas.

The Serbian dances are cheerful and brisk. They are a lyrical expression of joy of life, their characteristic being short, quick steps.

The Slovene dances are related to a broader Alpine region, and have been exposed to greater outside influence.

Prominent among them are the dances of the Bela Krajina region in southern Slovenia. Macedonian dances most vividly por-

tray the difficult conditions in which the people lived in the past. Their dances are an illustration of social relationships: they especially portray the position of women in society, for the elements of these relations have made their way even into the dances.

Characteristic of the Macedonian dances is the developed technique and style of the steps. In this respect they have been developed to perfection, and Macedonian dancers possess an extremely high level of skill.

● TESHKOTO

A special place is held by the Macedonian folk-dance called the "Teshkoto," which is a dramatization of the difficult life of the Macedonians.

The Montenegrin dances are represented by the Poskocica, whose beautiful movements portray the highland character of the Montenegrins.

Yugoslav folk-dances have played an outstanding role in cultural presentation abroad.

Just as their national poetry attracted Goethe's attention and the attention of the whole of the European cultured world 150 years ago, so in the twentieth century their folk-dances are today contributing to the culture of the world.

L'APRES-MIDI D'UN FAUN RECREATED

JEROME ROBBINS, at 34 one of the most highly respected of theatrical choreographers, has recreated *Afternoon of a Faun* for the New York City Ballet.

FRANCISCO MONCION danced the faun, with TANAQUIL LECLERCQ as the nymph. The work opens in a ballet classroom (the word "recreate" is wide in meaning as used here) with Moncion flat on stage. He comes to life rippling his muscles and stretching, sees himself in an imaginary mirror and dances to himself.

FRESH

Leclercq enters, partners him before the mirror. Moncion turns, kisses the

nymph and—seeing each other as real people for the first time—they stop, break away and, while the faun lays down again, the nymph exits.

This was not the Nijinski/Debussy *L'Après* but, as a modern's attempt at introspection, it brought a chlorophyllic freshness to N.Y. City Ballet.

Ballet Theatre in Paris

BALLET THEATRE opened in the Paris Palais De Chaillot on May 12 after several transportation accidents. These caused a change of debut programme but first houses were sold to near capacity.

Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch received most notice with De Mille's *Rodeo* and *Harvest According* (based

upon a Walt Whitman line) and *Gala Performance* completing the evening.

TOUR

Before the group's arrival on July 13 they will have appeared in Venice, Rome, Monte Carlo and Lausanne. The season here ends on August 8.

Debut Missed

ELAINÉ FIFIELD, Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet dancer, was forced to miss her debut with the parent company at Covent Garden at the end of May.

Nursing an injured foot, she bore up well under what must have been a jarring disappointment. Her appearance with Sadler's Wells Ballet will now be scheduled for sometime in the new year.

JOSE GRECO AND THE WITCH DANCE

Dancing is the Hat Trick in "Sombrero"

JOSE GRECO is, without doubt, the most successful Spanish dancer of today. In the United States his current theatre and club tour is doing tremendous business and his appearance in M-G-M's *SOMBRERO* is one result.

He dances only once in *Sombrero*, but of this dance two rarely dance-sympathetic columnists wrote: "Greco is sensational in this" (Ed. Sullivan in the N.Y. Daily News); "Jose Greco's dance in *Sombrero* is the greatest thing in the picture" (Hedda Hopper).

It takes a great deal of fresh talent to win praise of this calibre from writers more given to acid than accolade!

Greco deserves it. The excitement projected by his work is that caught once in a season—even then only perhaps—of watching Spanish dancing in the theatre.



CYD CHARISSE

Cyd Charisse, most neglected of Hollywood's dancers, is at last reaching an enviable position in the film city.

In *Sombrero* she has had Hermes Pan choreograph a Witch's Dance set upon a mountain plateau (sheer ballet décor this) and inspired by the Gipsy need for cleansing through fire, air, earth and water.

With incredible speed and bravura she spins through an invigorating dance which culminates in a thunder storm lashing her body just as she raises a sword to kill her unclean self. The rain cleanses away her guilt, she falls exhausted.

In the telling this may seem trite; set upon an actual Mexican plateau (but with good covering) it is a dance of great strength and theatrical effectiveness.

The film itself is lethargic but charming with the inevitable bull-fight and, perhaps equally inevitable, Yvonne De Carlo.

But for Charisse and certainly for Jose Greco, *Sombrero* is a film to see . . . even if you must sleep through the plot.

Two Shots of Jose Greco taken during his dance in the film



Toumanova dances in
"Tonight We Sing"

as Anna Pavlova

THIS 20th-Fox film biography of Sol Hurok is a digest of the Hollywoodiae fragments of the American impresario's life.

With the talent available to him, the director—Mitchell Leisen—has done as well as if he had been given a cast of hacks and a routine plot.

WHAT IT HAS

So forget the story, forget the potential of the artists who appear. Concentrate on what the film does have.

Ezio Pinza, acting and singing the role of Chaliapin with gusto. Issac Stern as Ysaye. Jan Peerce's fine voice dubbed upon some mouthing actor. And Tamara Toumanova.

In *TONIGHT WE SING* Toumanova dances Pavlova's Dragonfly ballet and the Dying Swan. Neither takes much screen time, nor would Pavlova recognise her work in the lavish setting provided by Walter Scott.

ONE REASON

But her brief appearances are the highlights of the film and, if nothing else, *TONIGHT WE SING* keeps alive our too-seldom revived memories of the classical technique which exists with such strength and art in Toumanova.

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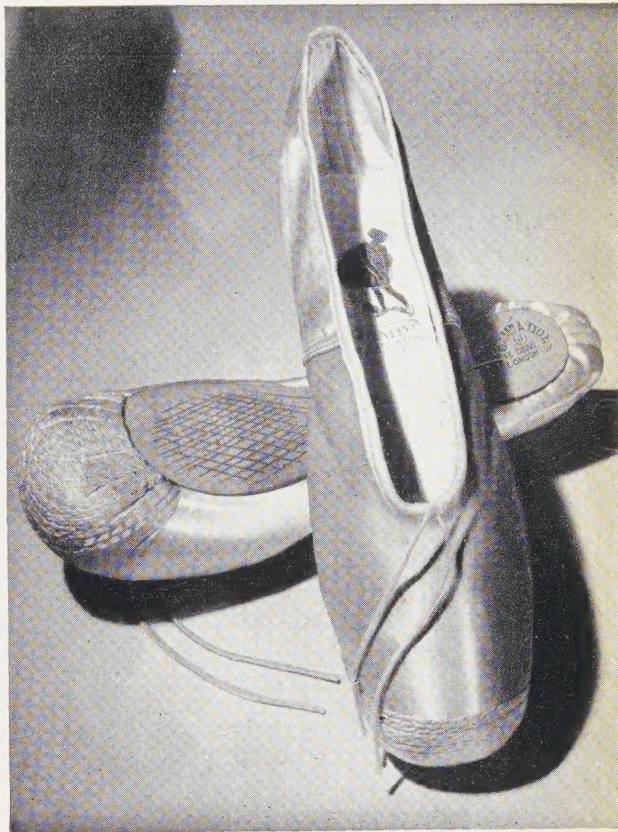
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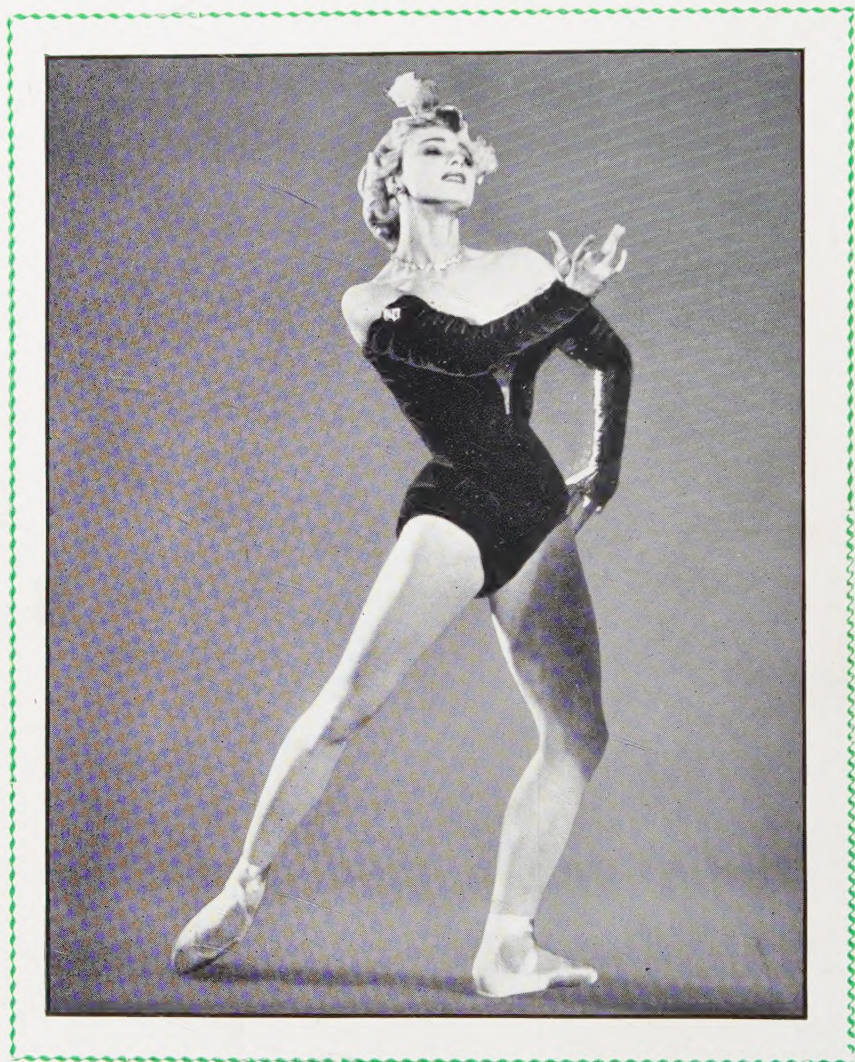


PHOTO GALLERY No. 15—JULY, 1953

NATHALIE LESLIE, Ballerina with Anton Dolin's Festival Ballet which opens a London Season this month.